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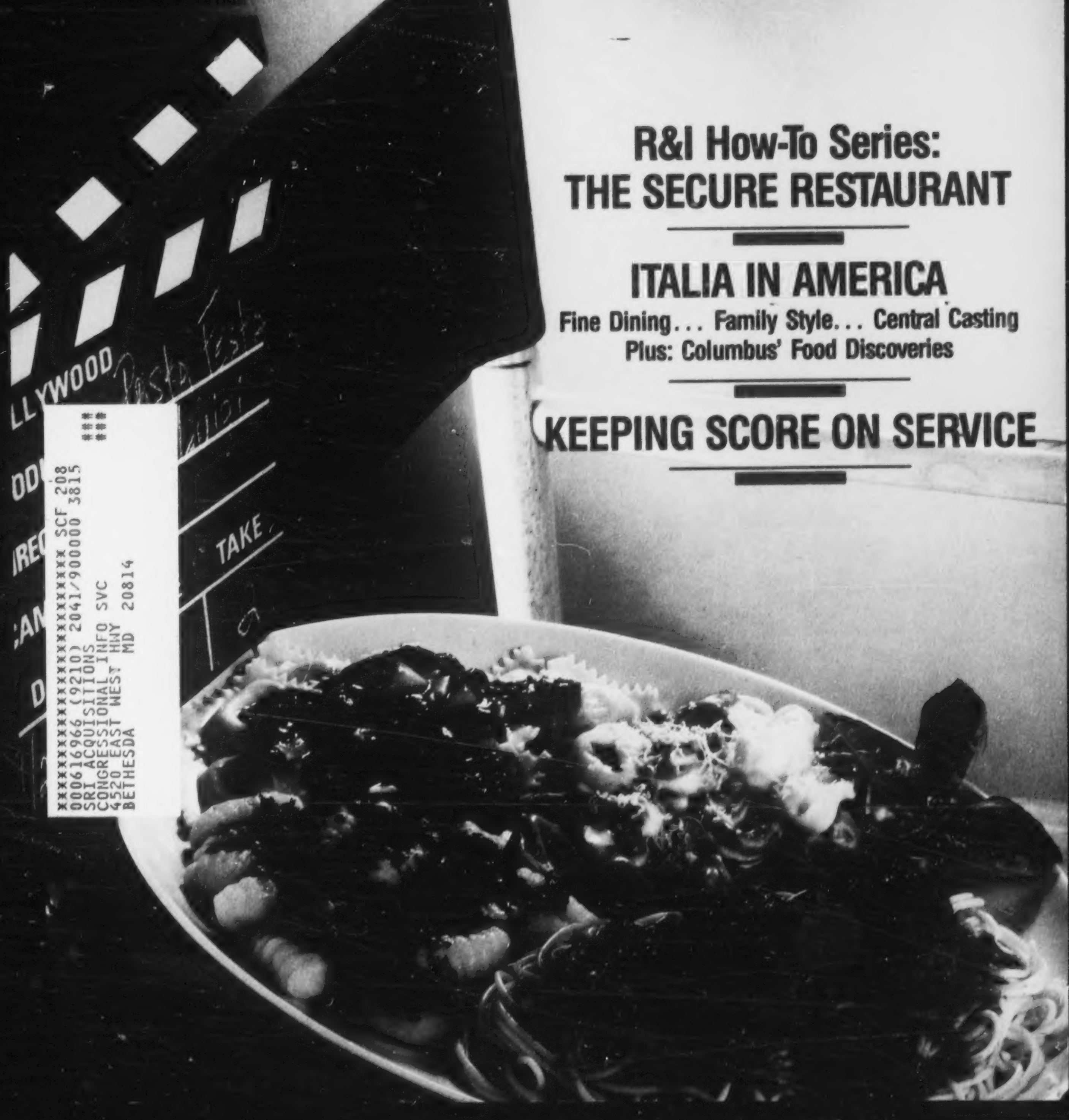

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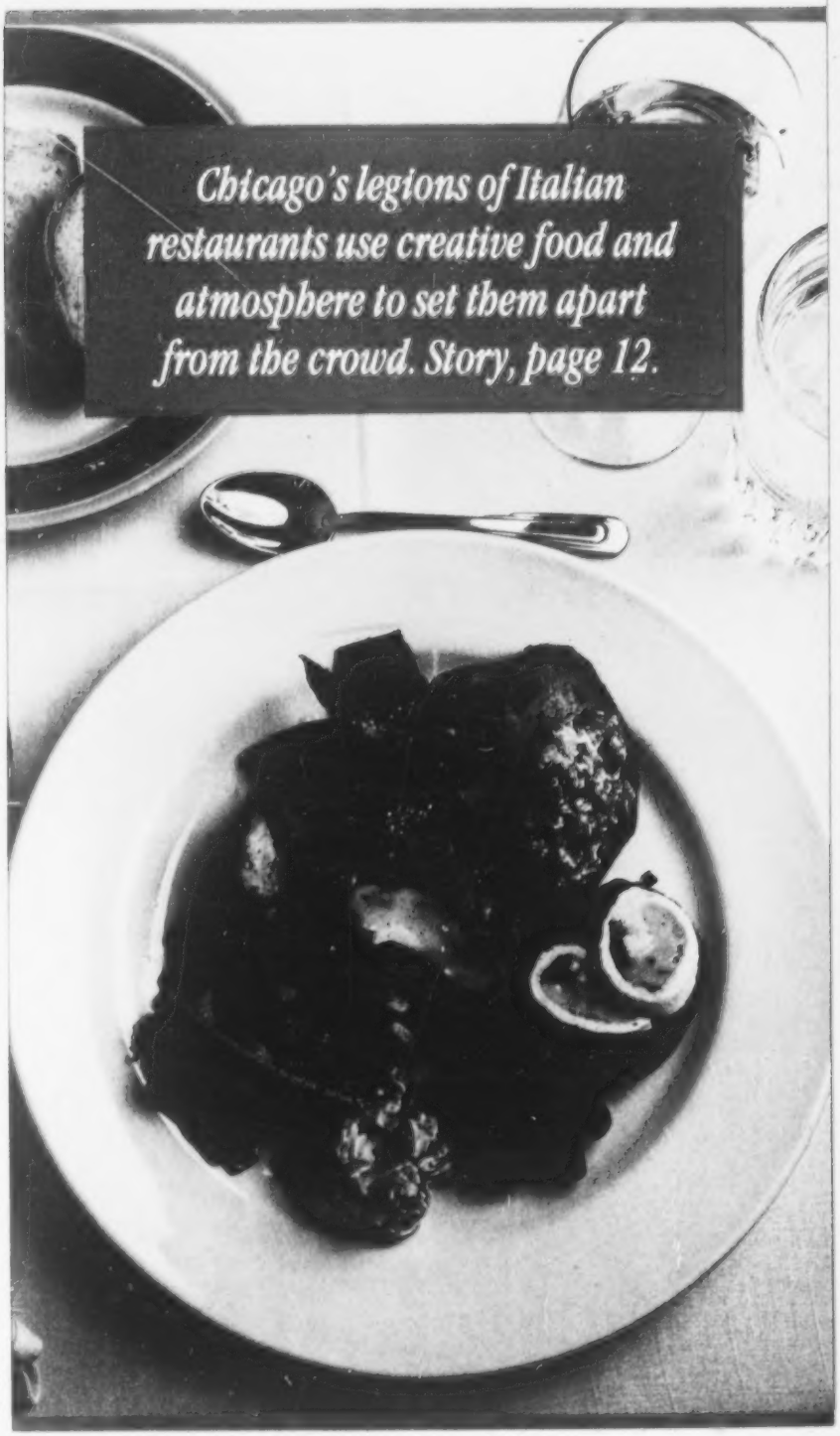
Chicago's legions of Italian restaurants use creative food and atmosphere to set them apart from the crowd. Story, page 12.

Make Guests Aware Of Their Options

While 53% of restaurateurs say it's fine for customers to change an order even after it has been placed with the kitchen, only 23% of consumers believe they should have that right. And while 69% of operators say guests may substitute an item on the menu, only 47% of consumers feel they should be able to do so.

Those disparities—and more—turned up in a recent survey of 1,000 consumers and 150 restaurateurs and restaurant critics about customer service options, done by MasterCard International.

"The survey results show that restaurateurs are more willing than ever to go the extra mile for their customers," says Ellen Alexander, vice president of restaurant marketing for MasterCard International. "But most diners don't realize how far a restaurateur will go, or that they have rights as customers. Operators need to train employees to make sure customers are comfortable with their decisions."

For example, 72% of restaurateurs will send back properly prepared food just because it doesn't meet a customer's taste expectations. However, only 55% of customers are aware of that option.

The survey also reveals restaurant critics' biases. For example, more critics than patrons dislike service charges in lieu of tips, and more critics think they should be able to make more substitutions and special requests.

Survey results also point out consumers' concern about value. While food quality and service are important in the restaurant decision-making process for consumers, operators can differentiate themselves by offering consumer's favorite service extra—complimentary appetizers.

—J.W.

MASTERCARD'S CUSTOMER BILL OF RIGHTS SURVEY

	CONSUMERS	RESTAURATEURS	CRITICS
Which is your favorite service "extra"? (To restaurateurs: Which extra do you offer guests?)			
☐ A complimentary appetizer	32%	11%	56%
☐ To be asked if you'd like leftovers wrapped	24	97	8
☐ Free mints, cookies or an after-dinner drink provided at the end of a meal	19	44	23
☐ Free valet parking	14	11	8
☐ Free coat check	6	43	4
Which rights should patrons have?			
☐ Ask to be seated elsewhere if you are unhappy with your table selection	75%	99%	92%
☐ Send back properly prepared food just because you don't like its taste	55	72	44
☐ Make reservations for a small party	54	73	93
☐ Substitute items and request special orders	47	69	76
☐ Ask for a different server-	31	73	43
☐ Change an order even after it has been placed with the kitchen	23	59	35
Which restaurant policy do you dislike the most? (To restaurateur: Which policy do you think your customers dislike the most?)			
☐ Gratuity automatically added to the bill	45%	61%	55%
☐ Getting charged for coffee and tea refills	17	9	13
☐ Having orders itemized unclearly	13	7	12
☐ Having the server refuse to split the bill	8	13	11
☐ Being unable to have the bar tab carried over to the dinner bill	7	4	7
☐ Receiving a bill without the tax being broken out	5	3	1
What is the most annoying thing a server can do?			
☐ Refuse to put orders on separate checks	33%	25%	27%
☐ Be unfamiliar with the menu	26	41	31
☐ Give oral delivery of a long list of specials without prices or any written backup	25	17	37
☐ Say, "Sorry, no substitutions"	13	16	5

Source: MasterCard International, 1992

375 MICROWAVE

The HM-1600 microwave is designed with a pull-down door and double shelf to add cook space and convenience, according to the manufacturer. Eight keys are programmable on the unit for up to 16 different settings and 5 different ranges—high, medium, low, defrost and stand. ***Hobart Corp.***

376 ROLL-IN RACKS

Cres-Cor's Model 207-UA-13 universal roll-in racks feature open wire pan supports to improve blast-chill efficiency. This new design maximizes air circulation to help speed the cook-chill process. ***Cres-Cor/Crown-X, Crescent Metal Products Inc.***

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